

# News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

Massachusetts Seventh District

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **MARKEY NOTES THAT RJR'S DECISION TO WALK AWAY FROM TOBACCO LEGISLATION WAS SCRIPTED OVER 3 MONTHS AGO**

**WASHINGTON, DC** - U.S. Rep. Ed Markey today observed that the announcement by R.J. Reynolds Co.'s Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Steven Goldstone that he is terminating his company's active participation in supporting tobacco legislation appears to be part of a public relations strategy outlined in a confidential industry memo from December 1997. Goldstone made his remarks during at speech today at the National Press Club.

Markey said, "Mr. Goldstone's announcement today should surprise no one. He appears to be acting out a script developed by an advertising agency (the Bozell Sawyer Miller Group) in December of last year. During the Commerce Committee's January 29 hearing with the tobacco CEO's, I warned that the very existence of this industry 'communications plan' brought into question whether or not the companies were coming before Congress in good faith. The most troubling of the memos stated 'communications objectives' was: 'to create the basis for an exit strategy, i.e. ideally, industry made a legitimate offer and **the politicians played politics and made a mess of it.**' (emphasis in the memo)."

"In fact, the tobacco companies have been playing 'hide-and-seek' with documents that are devastating to their case. The courts in Minnesota have ruled against them, the Supreme Court has ruled against them, and their position continues to erode in the court of public opinion. The American people want Congress to move forward on meaningful tobacco-control legislation that reduces teen smoking, gives the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) full authority to regulate nicotine, and makes no public health compromises at the insistence of the tobacco industry. The tobacco industry has chosen to follow a slick script; lawmakers must follow their conscience," said Markey.

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